this strategy, a number of programmes/schemes have been launched which include schemes like Assistance to States for Developing Export Infrastructure (ASIDE), establishing Agri Export Zones, Market Access Initiative, strengthening "Focus LAC" programme, introducing "Focus Africa" programme, etc. In the Exim Policy 2003-04, besides, the focus on Service exports, policies have been devised to strengthen Special Economic Zones (SEZs), 100% Export Oriented Units (EOUs), etc. A new programme called "Focus CIS" has been introduced. Thus measures are being taken from time to time to increase India's share in world exports.

Authenticity of ISO certifying agencies

4489. SHRI B.P. SINGHAL : Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

<a) whether there is any system to check if ISO certifying agencies which have issued certificates were actually authorised to do so;

(b) if not, the credibility or authenticity of such certificates;

(c) whether Government are aware that in the reimbursement proforma there is no provision to ensure that an SSI unit is actually complying with ISO norms and standards, before the reimbursement is sanctioned;

(d) if so, why this should not be made mandatory before reimbursement is given; and

(e) the details of subsidies and all schemes which are currently in vogue in granting of subsidies for obtaining ISO certification ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENIVIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) At present, the activities of Indian/foreign agencies granting ISO 9000 arid ISO 14001 certificate operating in India are not being monitored by any Government agency as the process of certification is voluntary and not mandatory. There is no process for official registration of such ISO certifying agency. The certificates that are being issued by the certification bodies which are signatory to the Multilateral Arrangement (MLA) of mutual recognition are considered credible and authentic. The accreditation mark on the certificate is the authority for the certifying agency to issue the certificates. The accreditation mark can also be verified by any individual or department to verify the authority to issue ISO certificates. The validity and scope of the accreditation of the certifying agency can be verified from the website of the respective accreditation council. The

Quality Council of India which is a registered autonomous Society set up through a joint initiative of the Government and industry associations, has also established a National Accreditation Board for Certification Bodies (NABCB) which, in turn, is a signatory to the MLA and also provides accreditation to certifying bodies.

(c) and (d) Cases for reimbursement are considered for approval by the Screening Committee set up under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary & Development Commissioner (SSI). The Committee is represented by expert members from the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS), Standardization Testing and Quality Certification (STQC) body under the Department of Information Technology and Quality Council of India (QCI). BIS and STQC are also certification agencies accredited by International Accreditation Bodies.

Office of the Development Commissioner, Small Scale Industries while considering requests for reimbursement checks:

(i) that ISO 9001/14001 certificate have "Logo" and the Accreditation number of the Accreditation *body,*

(ii) that ISO 9001/14001 certificate have complete address of the location/ site which has been certified; and

(iii) the validity of the ISO 9001/14001 certificate *i.e.* date of issue and date of expiry.

In addition, an internal study is also undertaken by Office of the Development Commissioner, Small Scale Industries, with the assistance of its field offices *i. e.* Small Industries Service Institutes (SISIs) to ascertain the compliance with ISO norms and standards etc.

Further the National Productivity Council has been assigned a study on all India basis to assess the impact of ISO 9001/14001 reimbursement scheme in terms of improvement in productivity, export performance and quality management installed by the unit etc.

(e) Some Departments of the Government of India encourage the industry to follow the international standards like ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 by providing a token assistance.

Ministry of Small Scale Industries Office of Development Commissioner (SSI) have been implementing a Scheme under which 75% of the expenses incurred by SSI units in acquiring Quality Management System - ISO 9001 certification, are reimbursed (restricted to Rs. 75,000). The validity of the Scheme has been

extended up to 31.3.2007. The scope of this Scheme now has been extended to provide reimbursement of expenses of acquiring Environmental-Management System (EMS) ISO 14001 Certificate w.e.f. 18.10.2002.

Development of Export Infrastructure

4490. SHRI RUMANDLA RAAMACHANDRAYYA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided on a twelve fold increase to Rs.330 crore for the year 2002-2003 in assistance to States for development of export infrastructure;

(b) if so, whether a conference on export promotion efforts was held recently and has decided to set up institutional mechanism like Export Promotion Council under the Chairmanship of Chief Ministers of States;

(c) whether the States have also been asked to put in place export policies based on export promotion plans for the major commodities exported by them in consultation with Export Promotion Council; and

(d) if so, to what extent, this will give a boost to the exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI RAJIVPRATAP RUDI): (a) The Department of Commerce has a Scheme for development of Export infrastructure called Assistance to States for Developing Export Infrastructure and Allied Activities (ASIDE). In 2001-2002, the allocation under this Scheme was Rs. 49.52 crores. This was increased to Rs. 322.88 crores for the year 2002-2003.

(b) to (d) No such conference was held. However, commodity-specific Export Promotion Councils are functioning for promotion of exports of those commodities. Export Promotion Committees in the States have also been set up under the chairmanship of the Chief Ministers of the States to put forward the export policy for States and work towards the setting up of export infrastructure and promotion of overall exports in the States. The involvement of States in the export promotion is expected to give a major boost to the exports.

Decanalising the Petroleum Imports

4491. SHRIMATI BIMB A RAKAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to decanalise petroleum imports presently handled by State-owned trading agencies;

(b) whether Government are committed by WTO Charter to decanalise its